THE SEASONABLE ADDRESSE OF THE CHVRCH OF ENGLAND

To Both HOVSES of PARLIAMENT.

Cogitaverunt Consilia quæ non potuerunt stabilire.
Psalm. 20.

Anno Domini, 1677.

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The ſeaſonable Addreſſe of the Church of England to both Houſes of Parliament.

My LORDS & Gentlemen.

I Should not in this Conjuncture interrupt your important & publick cares, did not the preſſing exigence of my concerns, & the fatal conſequence of my preſent condition, even force me to this Addreſſe. And to whom can I better bring my aggrievances then to both Houſes of Parliament? Is it not to the authoritie & great wiſdome of Parliaments, that Reformation owes its eſtabliſhment its firſt riſe & being? Have not Parliaments ever ſtood cloſe & conſtant to the Proteſtant cauſe & oppoſed themſelves as a wall for the Houſe of God? To whom then can I more freely communicate my affaires, or make a clearer diſcovery of my ſerious & ſecond thoughts then to this Noble Repreſentative of the Nation, & from whome can I promiſe my ſelfe a more gracious audience then from ſo many dutifull and deare Sonns of mine, who cannot but regard my complaints with a juſt ſenſe & feeling, eſpecially when they call to mind that I aim at nothing but their own good, & that all I ſay, proceedes only from the incumbent duty, & the tender affection of a loving Mother?

During that bleſſed yeare of Indulgence to tender conſciences when every one ſate vnder his own vine abounding peaceably in his own ſenſe, there was a happy end of that endles thing we call Controverſie: Tythes were paid with out murmur; our Clergy had their due reſpect no body repining then at their rich revenues; but ſince you withdrew his Majeſties gracious *Declaration* the ſcene is changed & the Nation run back into ſuch lamentable diſtractions & differences about Religion, that I now ſtand at bay, engaged in diſputes againe, & what can we expect from

thence, but noise & clamour & the bitter exceptions of critical dissenters, the natural consequences of such encounters?

My LORDS & Gentlemen

When I must thus see my old wounds burst out againe & bleed a new, our common interest & the occasion I thinke require that I make you a faithfull report how things stand with vs in Controversie, & give you a brief account of our Principles & those specious difficulties & smooth pretences that are objected to vs, for so we shall see what will bare the Test, know our own strength, & what solution to return an Antagonist. And to put things in a fuller & clearer light I humbly crave leave to speake my mind plainly without reserve, & to argue even like an Adversary, for in this Supream Court of Iudicature nothing that's material ought to be concealed, & in these high concerns of eternity, nothing ought to be dissembled that may startle a Protestant in his Faith, or encourage a Dissenter to run on in his non conformity.

I will begin with that which was the immediate cause of my Addresse vnto you & has been of late objected with so much applause *viz* That a Protestant is but a Fanatick of a litle longer standing then the rest, & has not one solid Principle for any part of his Faith as it stands in opposition to the Church of Rome. The slander is great, & the charg runs high, but if we will take vp the difficultie from the spring head, a few words will make our case clear & intelligible.

Vpon a serious review of our breach with Rome & the grounds thereof, I thinke we cannot chuse but own that our separation from that *see* & our whole Reformation too, hang vp on this single thread.
id. 39. *That the Church of Rome had err'd in Faith:* for vnles she had err'd
n. 19. in Faith what need was there of Reformation? whence a Dissenter will at first sight discover that our foundamental reforming Principle was the *Churches Fallibility*. A weake foundation, as our Adversaries will have it & abundantly sufficient to draw all our superstructures vpon our own heads into a common heape of rubbish! For if that Church be fallible & have err'd in Faith which was
m. 1. once *the Piller & ground of Truth:* that Church against which the
p. 3. gates of Hell were never to prevaile: where, & when shall we find a Church

a Church without errors? And if the Church of England may have her errors too, I desire it may be seriously considered whether our very first Protestant Principle *Fallibility*, doe not even degrade & vnchurch our selves. For that rowling stone being once layd as a firm foundation, not only any other Christian Church may possibly & probably be as good, nay a great deale better; but what bonds, what security can we give any good Christian that we have not been out in our accounts & taken wrong measures in our Reformation? And by what argument can it ever be made appeare that the Church of England may not lawfully be reformed a new whensoever Fanaticks shall thinke fitt to beginn the worke, as we may now justly apprehend they doe?

Have they not a president of dangerous consequence before their eyes? For by the same warrant, method, & Commission we reformed the Church of Rome, why may not the Presbyter lawfully reforme the Protestant, the Quaker the Presbyter, the Anabaptist the Quaker; nay why may not Reformation thus run round at pleasure through all those litle fractions of Fanaticks who now in most parts of the Kingdome are schismatically setting vp for themselves without any other stock, God knows, to begin the world, then some new Translation of the Bible, a dark lantern they call *the light* & a litle Familiar they call *the life* the *Witnes*, & the *privat spirit*? A satisfactory answer to this obvious Querie has cost me many anxious thoughts & even after *Reformation Justified* & *A rational account of the grounds of Protestant Religion* I still look vpon it as a Gordian knot that was never yet vntied nor cut a sunder. For either we could lawfully on account of errors reforme the Roman Church or we could not; if we could not; our revolt from that *see* was Schism of the deepest dy. If we could lawfully reform the Church of Rome on pretence of errors: our Hierarchie our Liturgy, & most part of that Protestant doctrine that is proper to vs, being held by diss nters superstitious errors & abominable relicks & ragges of Popery, & being proved by them to be such, by the self same arguments we proved errors in the Church of Rome [as any one may see that will make the application] does it not evidently follow that the Church of England is a meer

By Dr. Still.

Tennant at will, that may be turned out by a legal Ejectment when Fanaticks please; & what critical time of the moon must that be, wherein a new Reformation in Religion may not please illiterate factions & fanatick spirits? so that vpon the whole matter I know not whether separatists can wish to put the whole tryal of their non conformity on a better issue, then this, that if we could desert the Roman Church for her errors without the guilt of Schism, why may not they lawfully desert our Communion on the same ground, we neither pretending to an Infallibility in any thing we differ from the Church of Rome nor having any *Office of Assurance* that *de facto* we doe not *err*, as they judge we doe?

My LORDS & Gentlemen

I am loath to insist here vpon other vncomfortable consequences our *Fallibility* must needs lead vs to, but if that first fundamental Principle moulder into such sandy deceitfull footing whether can we make our next appeal but to the writen word of God, which you know is looked vpon by Protestants, as a sure ground of our Reformation, & a sufficient warrant for all our doctrine as it is peculiar to vs & distinct from Popery. But to vndeceive the world in this vulgar error, & to let you see what Principles we must at length trust vnto, give me leave on this occasion to represent ingeniously to both Houses, how vnserviceable I find Scripture in order to our present Controversies. We have been told oftentimes by our Roman Antagonists, & God grant in the end we may not find it true, that our Protestant Tenents are never at a greater losse, then when they are brought home to the Bible. For what vnderstanding & judicious Protestant can take that mysterious booke into his hands, but at the very first turning he must see himself in a labyrinth without a clew & miserably hamper'd in insuperable difficulties which way so ever he goes?

And first as to the true *Canon* though we have already declared in the sixt Article of our nine & thirty, that we vnderstand thereby *those Canonical Bookes of the old & new Testament of whose authority there was never any doubt in the Church*, yet I may confidently tell you, that this is but a very confused, & imperfect notion of the Canon, that lapps it vp in too little room, or rather in effect takes it all

it all away. For what part of Scripture is there either new, or old, which ſome time or other, even prime holy Fathers of the Church have not queſtioned & called in doubt? There is no ſchollar who has looked into their writings but will own as much. Both the old & New Teſtament were written originally in the learned languages of Greek or Hebrew & we received both from the cuſtody & corrupt hands of the Church of Rome; & when the fountain was ſo impure, can we thinke the ſtream ſhould run clear? when the veſſel was ſo throughly poyſoned, muſt not the wine carry a high tincture of the contagion with it? If the Church of Rome could ſo notoriouſly falſify the ſenſe, can we thinke ſhe would not foiſt what ſhe pleaſed into the letter too? Can we beleeve Providence would preſerve the Text entire, when the ſenſe that was of greater moment was ſo long perverted? Or can we thinke a Book of that nature could ly ſo many yeares in the Conſiſtory without being tained & over grown with ſuperſtitious errors? Nay whether during that long term of time that Popery over ruled the world, the Apochrypha did not creep into the Canon, or the Canon into the Apochrypha, what Proteſtant Principle can aſſure vs? Hence it is that our Adverſaries have ſo often run to this vnanſwerable Querie as they imagine, *viz* on what ground we could receive the Bible from the Church of Rome & reject her *Canon* that was of no leſſe authority? If the Church of Rome could erre in the deliverie of the Canon, why might ſhe not err as much in that of the Apochrypha? & if we could lawfully denie the firſt, as we have done, by lopping off eight whole Bookes, which ſhe allows for Canonical & has ever approved for ſuch; why may we not on the ſame account caſheer the ſecond too, & ſo looke vpon the whole, as a Booke that deſerves no more credit, nor reſpect then it ſhall pleaſe the Courteous Reader to beſtow vpon it?

But when we have found out the preciſe number of Canonical Bookes, vnles we have alſo the true Copie of this Canon & the true Tranſlation of that Copie, it is yet a very fruitles knowledg. It was vpon this weighty conſideration that our gracious ſoveraign king Iames of bleſſed memorie in Conference with his Biſhops at Hampton Court being moved there might be ſome new Tranſlation

Barlow in ſumme of the Conference.

Translation of the Bible in regard the Translations then received were corrupted & did not answer the truth of the Original, easily condescended to it, adding he had never yet seen any Bible well translated into English, but that of all he judg'd the Geneva Translation to be the worst. Now what was performed then, & how well we have mended the matter since, I even blush to tell you. I can assure you very many, & those earnest Protestants too, can not looke vpon our Bible without indignation, not only for the many corruptions they find there, but to behold there still the sordid wretched rhimes of *Hopkins* & *Sternhold* those Ballad-bards & black swans of Sion, & to see vs still close the Psalter with that immortal monument of *Robin Wisdomes* folly & singular dullnes in devotion, as if we tooke that synopsis of simplicity for a lesser Prophet.

Preserve vs Lord by thy deare word from Turke, &c.

But to come now to the true sense & meaning of this Translation, without which Scripture is equally appliable to all ends & purposes, & equally of no vse to every one. Either we are infallible Interpreters that are sure we cannot err, or we are not? If we are infallible Interpreters that can not err, we renounce the very ground of our Reformation *Fallibility* & shamefully draw vpon our selves, all those reproaches we have cast on the Infallibility of the Church of Rome. If we be not infallible Interpreters: where's a Protestants securitie? And by what argument can he satisfie any rational discoursive soule that he has been happier in lighting on the true sense of Scripture then Dissenters are? If it should be thought convenient in such straights as these, to have our recourse to the Omnipotent Chymistrie of the private spirit, & the *sober enquirie*; will it not be further vrged that the Scripture being obscure in many places the *vnlearned & vnstable deprave it to their own perdition* & other mens; & if holy Fathers may err, if General Councils may err, as we have declared they may, & if your deare Mother the Church of England be not exempted from that common fate, but have her frailties too, & may err no lesse then they, where shall we fix at lenght? Is not our Reformation built on a brave rock indeed, when it thus relys only on our own quirks & comments on Gods word, & those ruinous foundations

2. Pet. 2. cap. 3.

Article 21.

tions of mans witt & fancy? Whilst these *Ignes fatui* that are so full of smoak are our guides in Controversy, must not we run the continual hazard of wandring in the dark from one species of Fanaticism to an other? When our own guesses are the Rules & measures of our Faith, must not our Disputes of necessity run on at that rate they doe, without aime or end, & must not our only hopes be, that the good Prophet Helias will come at length, & give vs the decision of our debates by his vmpirage in the consestation?

In the mean time is it not a very vncomfortable consideration for any Protestant to reflect, that he can have no greater certainty that he is sound in faith, on which depends the eternitie of his weale or woe, then he has, that he has hitt on the right sense of Scripture, in expounding which, so many eminent Schollars, so many searching & subtle witts, after the studious labours of many yeares have been so grieviously mistaken? Now to say here, as our Authors often doe, that all necessaries to salvation are clear in Scripture to a sober Enquirer, lookes as like an evasion, & as weake a plea as our Adversaries can desire. For with what ground can we imagine, that it was ever the intention of the H. Ghost, that all things necessary to salvation should be so clearly written in the word of God, that we need no more then open the Booke and read, especially if we call to mind how obscure & mysterious for the most part the Scripture is, how it was all written vpon emergent occasions without any design of giveing vs a compleat body of the articles of our Faith: how it has omitted the consubstantiality of God the Son & the fundamental of fundamentals *viz* *That Scripture is Gods word.* which can be known to be such no other way but by Church Tradition. And if necessaries to salvation be so clear in the Bible as we pretend, whence spring our dissentions in these things, seing about what is clear there is no dispute: for whether a part be lesse then the whole, or whether the sun shine at noon who ever yet called in doubt? Nay though we could evidence to the world, that all things necessary to salvation were there easily to be found at first sight; yet would not this shamefull consequence persue vs close, & tread vpon our heeles *viz* That our Tenents

of *no Purgatory*, *no Transubstantiation*, *no Church infallible*, *no Papal supreamacy* &c. were not only vnneceſſary things in our Reformation, but in order to ſalvation too, ſeeing the Scripture nowhere in plain terms, declares it ſelf a Proteſtant in any one of thoſe important particulars?

For ſhould we goe about to prove by Scripture that there is no *purgatory*, where ſhall we find a Text to that purpoſe? ſhould we goe about to prove that there is no *Church infallible*, what words even ſtretched and tortured can reach that concluſion? If *no Tranſubſtantiation*, from what Chapter ſhall we take our proofes? And when we have found ſome ambiguous Texts for ſuch points as theſe, before they will fitt the occaſion they are quoted for, how vncertain in it ſelf, and how bold muſt the Comment be? For a Proteſtant then to goe about to drop Texts with his Adverſary, is a very ſenſles labour, for as long as he wants a faithfull Interpreter that can not err, muſt not the whole Queſtion come at length to this iſſue, whether of thoſe two doughty Diſputants hath the beſt guift in gueſſing?

My LORDS & Gentlemen.

You ſee to what paſſe Proteſtant Religion is brought, when we appeal to Scripture in the caſe, as to the grand ſupport, the foundation, & principal piller in the building.

But me thinkes I ſee ſome worthy Gentleman ready to riſe & referr me for Proteſtant Principles to a Booke called *A diſcourſe concerning the Idolatry practiſed in the Church of Rome*. A Booke that no ſooner appeared but I croſs'd my ſelf, as the Authour ſayes others did, at the *ſight of that dreadfull monſter*. A monſter that has the heeles were the head ſhould be, the concluſion before the premiſes, & his Proteſtant Principles behind that diſcourſe, which ſhould have been built vpon them. Had he plac'd them in the Preface & call'd them *Poſtulata*, it had been modeſtly done, but to impoſe vpon Proteſtants for Principles of their Faith, plain impertinences, ſlippery vncertainties, & down right falſities, was ſuch a profane peece of folly, as would have become much better the overweening confidence of a Scribe or Phariſe, then one who would now paſſe for a Doctor, & Divine of the Church of England.

Dr. Stil. Preface Gen.

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But as to the Principles themselves whether they were first published by the Authour, out of that natural inclination to Fanaticism he has shewd all along, or whether he were bribed by Dissenters to make Protestant Religion ridiculous to the world, is not easie to determine. I know divers have judged all these Principles of his, so farr below the Doctors abilities, that they could not but perswade themselves that his learned Consort had her white hands in the worke, & many have had so much civility for the sexe as to thinke his fair *Iuliana* would have done it a great deal better. How ever it was; we have all reason to be sorry that those Principles of his have now taken air, & seen the light, for since they appeared first abroad the authoritie of the Church of England [as you may have observed your selves] has been dayly impared, & many seing evidently these his Protestant Principles to be meer shoales, & quicksands, have deserted our Communion, imagining we could have no better grounds than what the great Doctor brought.

Though many of his Bookes have deserved a severe Censure long a goe, yet I have hitherto looked vpon all with an indulgent eye, & rather excused the weaknes of his writings, then reproved his errors, but when Fanatick Principles are so abusively imposed vpon vs, the provocation is too high to be dissembled, & I thinke my self obliged to give you such just exceptions against them, as occurr'd to me on the first reading over. We will take some few of them as they ly, though it be all one, at which end we begin, so litle connection they have with one an other.

An entire Obedience, sayes the Doctor, *to the Will of God being agreed vpon to be the condition of mans happines, no other Way is in it self necessary to that end, than such whereby man may know what the Will of God is.* Behold here the first stone of that goodly fabrick & as plain a ground of Protestant Religion as *Tenderden steeple is of Goodwin sands*. It was ominous the Doctor should stumble on such an vseles thing at his first setting out. For must not this first Principle of his, of necessity suppose all the Doctor did intend to prove *viz That Protestant Religion is the only Way to know the Will of* God & Princ. 1.

if the Courteous Reader will not grant him this [which is indeed but the whole Queſtion] may not an Amſterdam of new Religions be drawn from this firſt Principle, with as much eaſe & conſequence, as any advantage we can hope from thence? We cannot denie but all new & even the moſt ingenious concluſions in Mathematiques & other ſciences, have their riſe from very common & eaſie Principles, & it was not to be imagined the Doct. ſhould have found new Principles, for the eſtabliſhment of Proteſtant Religion, which bleſſed be God, has been ſufficiently provided with ſuch neceſſaries by Chriſt himſelf, but we might have hoped at leaſt, that he would have given vs the ancient grounds on which Reformation has ſtood all this while: for the excellency of a Polemick Authour conſiſts not in finding out new Principles that were never thought on before, but in a luckie combination of old, common, & eaſie Truths. But this firſt Principle of his neither alone by it ſelf, nor in any conjunction with other grounds can in the leſt concurr to the deciſion of any Controverſies now in debate between vs & Rome. His ſecond Principle is of the ſame vſe, & application, & runs thus.

ring. 2. *Man being framed a rational creature capable of reflecting of himſelf, may antecedently to any external revelation certainly know, the being of God & his dependence of him*, &c. Is not this to own publickly that we have no ſuch thing as Principles? what *Diſſenter*, though he were a Turk or Iew, might not acknowledg whatever we find here, & deduce his Faith from it in the ſame mood and figure? That man was a rational creature capable of reflecting of himſelf, was I thinke never yet denied, & by what good fortune it became a Proteſtant Principle who can tell? But had the Doct. antecedently reflected on himſelf, or what he went about, we had had ſome thing more pertinent to the thing in hand. For in what ſtraights muſt our Adverſaries thinke the Church of England ſtands, & what pleaſant ideas muſt they frame of our affaires, when they behold the glorious Achylles of our cauſe, thus caſting anchor in the air, & laying hold of ſuch inſignificant ruſhes, the very laſt refuges of a ſhipwrackt Religion & a ſinking Church? And yet the Dr. runs on with his third Principle [if

I may

I may call it such] & tells vs with an incomparable confidence that.

All supernatural & external revelation must necessarily suppose the truth of natural Religion, for unles we be antecedently certain that there is a God & that we are capable of knowing him, tis impossible to be certain that he has revealed his will. Princ. 3.

He that would see how soon a great Dr. may be quite out, & in how litle time he may loose his Text, let him but consider well this present Principle. The Drs. design was to give vs Protestant Principles that might secure any one from Popery; but not a word you see all this while of Protestant Religion, nothing of our nine & thirty Articles, & consequently nothing at all to the purpose. Though the Principle it self be a real Truth, yet it is so remote from the busines, that when I saw how much it belyed the title of a Protestant Principle, I imagined he would give vs the *Covenant* for his next Principle, but he has given vs that which is litle better & is indeed only a new coate for the moon in all her changes, & it will fitt a Fanatick of any shape or size. The words are these.

Nothing ought to be admitted for divine revelation which overthrows the certainty of those Principles which must be antecedently supposed to all divine revelation, &c. Princ. 4.

Here we have a bold stroake of the Drs. pen, & a Protestant Principle smooth & deceitfull & so blind with all, that if I vnderstand it right, it would never have our Faith looke beyond our senses. What can not be drawn by those five yoake of Oxen, is lumber & luggage & not fitt company for the Docts. Creed, so that if God should reveale to vs that the sun is many times bigger then the earth, as long as it appeares to the eyes to be only 2, or 3 foot in diameter, we must not beleeve one word he sayes. A most profound & pious Principle; nay the very argument the Iews impugned Christ with, for when they would have stoned him because he sayd he was God, they told him plainly that they did not stone him for any good workes he had done, but because he made himself God, when they saw clearly with their eyes that he was a man. Io: 10.

My LORDS & Gentlemen

If our Faith muſt never goe beyond the kenn of our ſenſes, if our beleef muſt never tranſcend the proſpect of our witt; muſt we not denie the Incarnation of Chriſt, the creation of the world that ſtarted out of nothing at one almighty word? muſt we not denie the ſtanding inſtant of Gods eternity, the vnity of his eſſence in a Trinity of perſons, the freedome of his acts, the infinitie of his Attributes, & when we have denied all theſe, ſhall we not have a pretty Proteſtant God of our own ſetting vp, & a faith ſutable to ſuch an Idol? yet this it is that the Dr. & this good Principle would perſwade vs to. He might have given vs the ſenſe & ſubſtance of all this, in termes as intelligible, had he poſitively maintained, that our ſenſes are the beſt Divines, & that fleſh & blood are the beſt Chriſtians, & the only guides of our Faith: & yet I thinke he muſt needs confeſſe, that the true ſons of *Barjona* beleeve myſteries which fleſh & blood knew not how to reveal vnto them. But his fift Principle makes amends for all, and he aſſures vs herein a high fitt of Fanaticiſm.

Princip. 5. *There can be no other meanes imagined where by we are to judg of divin revelation, but a faculty in vs of diſcerning truth from falſhood &c.* Thus Principles improve vpon the Drs. handes, every one being more impertinent, if that can poſſibly be, then the former was. How many thouſand Papiſts doe you thinke this one Principle will reclaime? The thing was only thought vpon by accident & put down by chance, & I can not tell whether it may not *fall within compaſſe of the Statute againſt Vagabonds & Sturdy Beggars*, for you ſee 1. how many degrees of longitude & latitude it is got from home or from any end or purpoſe. 2 how boldly & ſhamefully it beggs the Queſtion with this vnmercifull ſuppoſition on its back, that every diſſenter is a meer fool & Ideot & has loſt all faculty of diſcerning white from black, hands from head, feet from ſhoulders: for vnles a Proteſtant will thus engroſſe all witt & judgment to himſelf, what a noble ſtructure will he raiſe vpon this foundation?

Theſe eſſayes were ſufficient to let you ſee how the Doctr. has abuſed Proteſtants as the Iews did Chriſt, & put reeds into their hands

hands to make them as ridiculous as he could, and their doctrine too. But leaſt you ſhould perſwade your ſelves that theſe five firſt principles were only litle ſpies, or ſcouts that were ſent before the groſſe of that army that was marching after; let vs ſee what force we can diſcover about his main guard, which I take to be his 13. & 15. Principle. And here I find the two great Canons of his Faith directly pointed, as *Diſſenters* judge, againſt all Religion, & they are mounted in theſe following words.

It is repugnant to the nature of the deſign, & the Wiſdome, & the goodnes of God to give infallible aſſurance to perſons in writing his Will for the benefit of mankind, if theſe Writings may not be underſtood by all perſons who ſincerly endeavour to know the meaning of them in ſuch things as are neceſſary for their own ſalvation. Prin: 13. And *Theſe writings being owned as containing in them the whole Will of God ſo plainly revealed, that no ſober enquirer can miſſe of what is neceſſary for ſalvation, there can be no neceſſity of an infallible ſociety of men to atteſt or explain theſe Writings.* Prin: 15.

O infinite Wiſdome of the Incarnate Word! do our Adverſaries here crie out, Didſt Thou labour 3. & thirty yeares in laying the foundation of thy Church & didſt Thou leave no better Principles then theſe, to defend it when Thou hadſt done? Didſt Thou ſweat blood in planting thy Vinyard & thus leave it waſte to be overrun at pleaſure by Fanaticks of all future ages? And becauſe I muſt not here conceal even the vntoward arguments of diſaffected Diſſenters, I will appeal for them to the judgment of this high Court & the ſenſe of ſo many worthy members of Parliament I behold in this great Preſence, whether any thing but a meer Babel can be well built on ſuch fairy ground as theſe two laſt Principles? For does not the Doct. here make it impoſſible for any one to be an Heretick, & with the ſame breath open the ſluces for all kind of profane novelties in faith, and whole ſeas of heretical opinions to come rowling in? 1. He makes it impoſſible for any one that beleeves Scripture to be an Heretick, & learnedly confutes the Apoſtle who told vs *there muſt be Hereſies*: for no man can be an Heretick but he that errs obſtinatly againſt the Rule of Faith; now according to theſe Principles, the Corin: 11. 19.

Rule

Rule of Faith to every ſober enquirer is the word of God interpreted by himſelf: but tis as impoſſible to err againſt the word of God interpreted by him ſelf, as it is to err againſt his own ſenſe and judgement, or to aſſent to plain contradictions at the ſame time; therefore tis impoſſible to be an Heretick. 2. He opens the Church doores for all Hereſies to come thronging in. For does he not make every one a Prophet when he pleaſe, & licence all to commence enthuſiaſtick Doctors when they will? Tis but pretending modeſtly to the ſober enquiry & the work is done. But muſt we needs ſuppoſe there can be no ſober enquirers amongſt Diſſenters? Doe they never read Scripture but when they are drunk & ſee double? yet without theſe civil & charitable ſuppoſitions, what Proteſtant Doctrine can flow clear, from ſuch fountains of Fanaticiſm?

3. Have not we glorioufly impugned the Infallibility of the Church of Rome for theſe hundred yeares, when we have now found two Proteſtant Principles for the infallibility of every idle *Abigail* that has but the confidence to ſay ſhe reads Scripture ſoberly? And may not we hope now to ſee a ſtrang Vnity in Faith, & a bleſſed harmony in our Religious ſentiments, when the Miniſtery is thus made a chargable ſuperfluous cypher in the nation, & every rude, raw *Ignoramus* turned looſe to the Bible to looke his creed? In the managment of worldly concerns I am ſure, men obſerve an other method, & are ſo much more prudent then the ſons of light, that they will not rely vpon their own judgment in a plain Bill or Bond of any valew, but will run to Atturneys retain Council in the caſe, & ſubmitt humbly to the advice of thoſe who in that calling ſhould know more then them ſelves, yet a Proteſtant in expounding Scripture on which ſalvation may depend muſt truſt to nothing but his own head & the ſtiff ſtring between his head & ſhoulders.

Has it not been the conſtant Cuſtome of all Hereticks, to Father their errors on the word of God? Did not Arians Donatiſts Pelagians, *&c.* bring, as they thought, cleer Scripture for what they ſayd? Nay will not our zealous Presbyterians who have an Antichriſtian antipathy againſt Church & ſtate, as devoutly cite Scripture

pture for themselves as their Patriarch did when he tempted Christ in the desert? And did God do you thinke, give vs Scripture to set his Church on fire, & breed eternal dissentions about Religion? yet this must needs follow from these Principles, whilst every sober Enquirer has a right to his own Rule of Faith, or his own exposition of Scripture, & consequently, may lawfully stickle for it, though it differ as much from the Rule of Faith of all other men, as his witt, judgment & fancy does.

My LORDS & Gentlemen

These are pleasant considerations & redound much to the credit of our cause & that reputation of integrity we have carried with vs all along from our primitive times. But that which follows in the Doctrs. 18. Principle; if seriously considered, goes beyond all the rest: for here he supposing now, what he denied before, that even his sober Enquirer might misse in the right sense of Scripture, he has a word of comfort for him in the end, & he would have him beleeve it as a point of Faith, that *in this viz* in expounding Scripture *God has promised either he shall not erre or shall not be damn'd for it.* Good God! what profound ignorance have we lived in all this while? The Arians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Pelagians, & other such Ingeneers of Novelties have been hitherto looked vpon by all good Christians as damnable Hereticks and detestable rebells against the Church of God, & yet we now discover that all these were Protestant Saints, & blessed soules in heaven. Tis a truth not to be denied, for the Doctr. has not onely a Protestant Principle, but a revelation for it. For these men did not want witt enough to read Scripture soberly, nor to consider the sad consequence of mistaking in a matter of that main importance & though they denied the mystery of the Trinitie, the Incarnation of Christ, the necessity of Grace, & many other such metaphysical niceties, yet when they, departed this life they went directly to that happy place of blisse. For whether could they goe? Not to Purgatory, as you will easily beleeve, & to Hell they could not goe, God having promised that though they err'd in interpreting Scripture as they thought good, yet he would not damn them for it. Whether then could they goe but to the bea- *Princip.* 18.

tifical viſion of God Almighty?

Now if every ſober enquirer have ſuch a gracious promiſe from God himſelf, that either he ſhall not err, or ſhall not be damn'd for it: whilſt he is thus ſure of heaven on both ſides, what does it import whether he erre or no? And does the Doct. call this the reduction of our Faith to Principles? O invincible Champion, incomparable Combatant? How much are we beholding to thee for theſe brisk ſallies of thy learned ſoul? But didſt thou never reflect that erroneous judgments have not a poſſibility of being Acts of Faith, & if a man may be ſaved by his errors only, he may be ſaved without Faith, & if Nullifidians have Gods promiſe they ſhall get to heaven, why may not the Devils hope well as being farr better Proteſtants, or devouter Quakers of the two, for they at leaſt *beleeve & tremble*?

Iac. 2. 19.

Was ever any one ſo vnfortunate in the defence of our cauſe as the Doct. is? The Apoſtle told vs plainly That *without Faith it was impoſsible to pleaſe God* & S. Athanaſius in his Creed, which we have allowed in our 39. Articles, aſſures vs in the firſt place That *whoſoever will ſave his ſoule, before all things it is neceſſary to hold the Catholick Faith which vnles every one doe wholy & entirely adhere vnto, without doubt he ſhall everlaſtingly periſh.* But theſe were ſcrupulous Divines that wanted that latitude of conſcience the Doct. has; for he has a more compendious way to the joyes of heaven for his ſober Enquirer, & where in doe you thinke this ſhort way conſiſts, but in the numerous windings & turnings of his errors? when all fails, theſe will bring him to eternal happines and he has Gods promiſe for it. Would it not prove very much for the Dts. credit & ſhould we not thinke him an arrand Saint, ſhould he pretend another promiſe from God [as he may very well vpon the ſame ground] that he ſhould *argue cloſely* by ſaying nothing to the purpoſe, & that he ſhould *report faithfully* by telling lyes confidently, & that for his reward he ſhould get to heaven by going thither the contrary way? Muſt not Diſſenters laugh heartily when they ſee what rocks & ſhelves theſe Principles of the Doct. muſt needs drive vs on? Many Proteſtants have held that Faith alone could juſtifie without good workes, but to ſay that God has

Heb. 11. 6.

has promiſed that ſober *Enquirers* ſhall be ſaved with out Faith; or by their errors only, was ſuch a profound point of Divinity, as could never have occurred to any one who minded the conſequences of what he writt, or ſayd.

But to whom doe you thinke this promiſe of God, ſo ſlily foiſted into Proteſtant Principles was firſt made? How came the Doctor by the knowledg of it? Did he ever find it in Scripture? Could he who is ſo minutely accurate in the citation of ridiculous ſtories, omit a quotation of that importance, this would prove? Twas certainly a great overſight for the promiſe is ſweet & comfortable but he that can find it in Scripture, may alſo find in the ſame page & Chapter, that God has never yet promiſed any ſuch thing nor ever will. And what ſhall we doe then, when, we have revelation againſt revelation, promiſe againſt promiſe? which of the two is to be beleeved? A Diſſenter will immediatly decide the Queſtion & conclude in form, that the Dr. is a meer Mountebanck in Religion, & by vertue of his function & that high privileg of his calling, may lawfully cheat & lye *toties quoties* as the various exigence of his cauſe requires. For if this promiſe be not to be found in Scripture, as it is not, nor have any other ground then the Drs. word, as it has not, the Doctor muſt of neceſſity be either a notorious cheat that deludes the world with leger de main in Religion, or he muſt be an enthuſiaſtick viſionary that has private revelations of things no one ever had before. If the firſt: with what face can ſuch an Impoſtor appeare in the pulpit, write Controverſie, & treat matters of Religion he ſo much profanes? If the ſecond. Did he take all that paines to impugn private Viſions & revelations in the Church of Rome, and then reſolve his Faith & a Proteſtants too, into ſuch hypocondriacal fancies & illuſions of his own?

And now I would fain know whether there be any thing wanting in this good man, to make him a compleat Fanatick of the firſt magnitude, vnles it be, that he would found an *Order of Divines in Mode or Controverſial Scribes*, that ſhould neither regard credit, nor conſcience in what they write, & for this you ſee he puts fair, & though he would have the world beleeve, that he has read

his Library over, & over & has it all by heart: yet many thinke there are Polemick Gentlemen so charitable as to prepare poison for his pen, & study new occasions for him of drollery & derision; and these men for their sifting legends, gleaning vp little odd stories & violently tearing Authorities from the Text for the Doctors vse, that his Books may make a shew at lest, and seem to have something material, these men I say, may well hope for no smal preferment in that learned, & Religious Society.

But can we wonder Fanaticism should encrease so fast, when we see a pretended Champion of Protestant Religion, thus delude poor soules for which Christ spilt his precious blood, with fictitious promises of God, impertinent Principles plain cheats & impostures? And must not that man be desperatly bold & dareing, that will run the hazard of his salvation & venture an eternity of torment in the life to come, by following & relying on such a guide as this, who drives a trade, & gets a livelyhood, by such shamefull practises? In the interim has not this learned Dr. hard measure whilst he is so often told, that he is no Protestant but a wolfe in sheeps cloathing, a lunatick in Religion, that can give vs principles, such as they are, for, any thing or nothing but his own interest & ambitious aims? But goe thy wayes for a profound Doctor of Fanaticism, boast of thy new discoveries & brave attempts, onely remember thou hast done nothing all this while for the Church of England. Principles should resemble a legitimate Pedegree, one ought still to be the others lawfull issue, but thou hast given vs a rope of sand, a bundle of reeds, & a spurious generation of independent Positions, which I know not what I may better compare vnto in all respects, then to Cadmus his souldiers that sallied out of the serpents teeth, & were no sooner born but destroyed one an other. How much better were it to yeild vp the cause of our own accord, then to maintain it by such vnworthy & base shifts as these? If our Doctrine have no surer footing, let vs return with an Olive branch to the Church of Rome, let vs give her the honour, and glory of the day, & farewell Reformation for ever more.

My

My LORDS & Gentlemen

Having thus farr represented to you the main Protestant Principles our writers have hitherto stood vpon; me thinkes our superstructures now stand in view; where fore let vs but see in passing by, with what strength & connection the most eminent and magnificent parts of the building can hang togeather. These, as you know very well, are: *no Purgatory*, *no Transubstantiation*, *no vnbloody sacrifice*, *no Church infallible* & a renouncing some such other errors we reformed in the Church of Rome. That these make vp the very essence of Protestant Religion as distinct from Popery, is but too clear to be denied; for what have we reform'd all this while but those superstitious mysteries? Now these negative Tenents that are essential parts of our Reformation, are either plainly & positively revealed by Almighty God, or they are not. If they be reveald; they are not only Truths of the higheſt elevation, & points of divine Faith; but we oblige our selves to shew them in some part of Scripture which we can never doe. If they be not revealed; as all our Divines thinke fitt to own, then do we run on as dangerous & deep a precipice; for does it not follow by an vndeniable lawfull consequence? *Vid. E. VVorsly Protest. without Principles. d. 2. cap. 8.*

1. That our Reformation is at best, compounded of no other ingredients then scholastical opinions, that is, in plain English, disputable vncertainties, things Christ & his Apostles never taught the world. And are these a sufficient ground for our animosities in Religion & those infortunate distractions of the kingdom, which vpon no better account have been so long fomented?

2. That though we should renounce these, the essential parts of our Reformation, & detest them heartily, as publick Incendiaries, rocks of scandal, & the only seeds of discord between vs & Rome, we may be yet found in faith, & as good Christians as we were before

3. That it is no lesse then plain contradiction of our selves, to appeal to Scripture in these points, as our writers always do, in their Disputes with the Church of Rome, for if they be in Scripture, they are points of Divine Faith, & not inferiour Truths of a lower tire, that God never yet revealed. And thus must the whole fabrick

of our Reformation totter if the foundations be not better layd: *My LORDS & Gentlemen.*

After this brief consideration of our Principles & those superstructures we have built vpon them; it follows now that I communicate with you, some few of those melancholy thoughts the strange management of our cause is dayly suggesting to me. The *Vniversities* of England have been ever justly held, the two great Treasuries of witt, & learning, & the most famous nurseries in the world of all noble Arts, & sciences; & it is not to be denied even by our Adversaries, but that we have there at present, men of great knowledge, eloquence, & other abilities in all parts of learning: but I hope I may complain without offense, that these eminently learned men, too too prudently withdraw themselves from any publick engagement, & hardly ever enter the lists of controversy, whence it comes to passe, that our cause for the most part, is wretchedly maintained & never suffers more in the judgment of considering & vnderstanding persons, than by such as pretend te be Champions for it. I am ashamed to tell you, but I can not conceal it from any one who has looked into our Authours, how vainly they trifle away their time and their Readers too, in long loose discourses litle or nothing to the purpose; how seldome the very state of the Question is represented right, and how frequently they fight with nothing but their own imaginations as if they wanted Antagonists.

Either my natural aversion from a gingle of words, and huge heavy volumes that have nothing in them but such smal wares, has blinded my judgment & deceived me much, or there is litle to be found in the greatest part of our Polemical divines but pretty florishes they learnt in schooles, Quibbles & criticismes, jeers and calumnies, & above all apochryphall stories in matters of fact, that concern neither Papist, nor Protestant now living; whether they be true or false. When we see sometimes the glorious promises of a Title page [but that Travellers assure vs that Rome stands yet in the same place & posture, & that affaires goe there still as they vsed to doe] who would not thinke that we had ruin'd the Vatican, & blown vp the Consistory with the Pope & Cardinals?

And

And when we behold ſuch a world of hard words in the margent, with ſeſſions, & Councils, Manu-ſcripts, & Reſcripts, Popes & Bulls & the names of innumerable Authours vnknown, with an *Anno Domini* in the end, who would not bleſſe himſelf & ſtand amazed at the vaſtnes of their Library, the firmnes of their memory, & their boundles reading? whereas if we looke ſeriouſly into the ſolidity, & ſubſtance of the Booke, we ſhall only find a nutt ſhell in an *Ilias* of leaves, or a peece of Controverſie as cold as *Baxters winding-ſheet*, or as drie, & dull as the *Seaſonable Diſcourſe* which even after 4 or 5. editions, was never yet diſgeſted into common ſenſe. Neither can they appeare otherwiſe to any prudent & judicious Reader. For

1. They ſeem never to looke through their deſign before they put pen to paper, nor doe they endeavour to ſetle any thing they ſay vpon ſolid Principles; whence it happens that they wander vp & down in all they write, like a benighted Traveller that had loſt his way, & we ſee every day by experience, that when a Fanatick is to be confuted, they run to Fathers, Traditions, Councils, & ſuch Popiſh arguments, and when a Papiſt aſſaults them with the very ſame weapons they had vſed before, they run to the Fanaticks ſanctuary, that is, to their *privat ſpirit* in interpreting Scripture as they pleaſe; and thus they defend the Church of England by the ſame vicious Circle the late Vſurper maintained his pretended power, when he had his Parliaments to overawe his army, & his Army to overawe his Parliaments.

2. They never bolt, nor ſift well matters of Faith from the courſer part of Divinity, or Scholaſtical opinions for where the Church of Rome has defined nothing in her Councils, a Papiſt may hold which ſide he pleaſe, & yet be a good Papiſt ſtill; & it is but in vain to object, that particular perſons of that Church, have been ſingular in their way, & walked alone out of the common road, & it ſtill gives an Adverſary a juſt occaſion to recriminate. If this one thing were but well obſerved, tis incredible how many of our glorious Champions *in folio* would ſhrink into litle dapper creatures in *Decimo ſexto* which in blew paper coates would become their liverie: & yet the Reader would get more by them & the Printer leſſe.

3. They

3. They pervert the natural order of the things themſelves, by bringing Controverſy into Sermons, & Sermons into Controverſie, that is, they preach when they ſhould diſpute, & diſpute when they ſhould preach. When *Reformation's Iuſtified* by pulpit pedantry, and all Church authority ſacrilegiouſly trampled on at the ſame time, what can we expect from that longwinded worke, but either the diverſion of the Audience, as it often happens, in hearing *Doctor Stillingfleet confute Doctor Stillingfleet:* or that, not having learning enough to looke through the litle wiles, & jugling tricks of his talking way, they renounce all Church authority, Reformation, and Religion too?

But the vſual method where by our Polemick writers become Graduates in Controverſy, is yet more deplorable, & carries with it ſuch a prejudice & palpable diſadvantage to our Cauſe, that I cannot but repreſent it to you. Is it not oftentimes the firſt ſtep to the ſeveral degrees of that great dignitie, to come freſh from the *Vniverſity* demidivines, or penfeathered Preachers, that can at leaſt flutter in the pulpit, ſpeake bigg & mountebanck the buſines to their *dearly Beloved* the ſhe-Saints of the Congregation, thoſe excellent Iudges of diſcourſe & reaſon? And when they have got a ſufficient ſtock of aſſurance, and are come to ſome perfection in their calling; or which many of them take to be the ſame, their canting language; is not their next ſtage a picke againſt Popery, & that everlaſting Topick of ſuch frequent vſe in their Sermons, their revileing of the Church of Rome? They are ſcarce advanced thus farr, when the applauſe of their feminine followers, and a litle itch with all of appearing to the world in print, engages them immediately in treating Queſtions they never ſtudied, nor well vnderſtood. And though the whole worke be but a rapſody of old ends of Controverſie, that have been printed and reprinted, anſwered & objected, objected & anſwered, as conſtantly every yeare ſince Reformation, as we had ſpring & fall; yet to the poor Pariſhioners the worke appeares new, and the Authours are cried vp for Divines many fathomes deep, & invincible Champions of the Church of England.

I thinke we need goe no farther for an inſtance then our Fa-

naticke

natick Father and moſt Reverend Sir of *Saint Andrews*, who had no ſooner learnt to bounce bravely in the pulpit and to lay about him as if he were beating *Bellarmine*, or pulling down the Popes triple Crown, but he preſently imagines his reputation ſtood engaged, to publiſh ſomething in Polemicks, there being ſuch great want of Controverſial Volumes. And firſt: by an *Irenicon* he proclaimes a peace; but a peaceable worke not bringing in the revenue was expected by it, on a ſudden he ſounds a charge, and gives vs *A rational account of the grounds of Proteſtant Religion* and his own adventures; where though he looſe himſelf in a wildernes of words togeather with the Reſolution of his Faith [the thing all along pretended] yet he returns from the conflict with flying colours, and then having reſted a while, and adored himſelf more for that mighty exploit, then Papiſts do all the Saints in heaven; he reſolves at length to ſignalize himſelf by ſome new encounter, and nothing will ſerve turn but he will down with the Idolatry of the *High Places*, the fat calves of *Baſan* and thoſe abominable Bulls of *Dan* and *Bethel*.

It was in this enthuſiaſtick heate, as ſome Proteſtants did obſerve, that he call'd againe for *Roſinante*, and mounting in the triumphant robes of the ſurplice & ſcarlate hood, with a long train of Fanatick Principles at his heeles, which made vp the pageantry of that glorious ſcene, he gave vs a comical *Diſcourſe concerning the Idolatry practiſed in the Church of Rome*. And though no Papiſt can be ſo vncharitable as not to give ſome litle leave, to ſuch an eminent Cavalier in Errantry, to conquer ſtill with all the plauſible circumſtances he could imagine, yet in the ſacred concerns of Religion to goe beyond all Poetical licences, to tranſcend all Romantick ſtraines; this certainly can not chuſe but make a deep impreſſion in the wellmeaning Reader, who ſeekes nothing but the naked Truth, and muſt needs breed a high eſteem of Proteſtant Religion in the zealous ſons of the Curch of England.

My LORDS & Gentlemen

I have treſpaſs'd on your patience, but I begg your pardon, that by a juſt ſenſe of ſeing our cauſe ſo notoriouſly abuſed I

have been so farr transported. But thus doe things stand with vs in Controversie, whilst we have learned Adversaries in the Church of Rome, whose abilities are not to be despriſed & whose arguments we must never hope to see defeated by a profane, and blasphemous drollery. This being the true state of our Polemical discourses, this the managment of our cause; it remaines now, that I humbly cast my prayers, and teares at the feet of this noble Senate.

1. That for the credit of our Nation and the honour of Christs Church men tainted with such corrupt Principles be not permitted for the time to come to vindicate our cause, nor to delude the world with such wild fanatick notions for the grounds of our Faith. We have suffered long enough already, on account of such declamatory, quodlibetical creatures, who have tackt about with the times, and by a petulant profaneſs in their writings, extravagancy in their Principles, and hypocriſie in their preaching, have but made good many of those reproaches our Adversaries have cast vpon vs.

2 That by a joynt concurrence of both Houses, or by an Assembly of our soundest, and best Divines, the true genuine Principles of Protestant Religion may be so plainly layd forth, that every one may see the Reformed Religion you profesſe, may be defended with credit, and relied on with security.

Hitherto my feares & jealousies of Popery have been no lesse then yours, & you may easily imagine what a sad prospect it is vnto me, to behold, the Anabaptist, the Quaker, the abomination of desolation the Presbyter, and whole heards of Fanaticks like so many Ægyptian locusts overrunning the Nation with their Nonsense in Religion, and the very first Principles of Paganisme. But tis yet a more wounding consideration to me to reflect, that these poor deluded soules, must run on in that direct road to perdition, never to be reclaimed by any Protestant Principle our writers have yet assigned. For by force of what Protestant Principle, can we either reduce or persecute any such Dissenters?

1. By what Protestant Principle can we reduce such lost sheep as these? For should we endeavour the conversion of a Quaker,

or

or ſome ſuch Fanatick, what more proper expedient in the caſe, than Ghoſpel experiences and the pure word of God? But if the blewapron'd Brother be impertinent, and vie Texts with vs, as he often does, and interpret all according as his inviſible, vnacceſſible, and indeed vnintelligible light, or private ſpirit pleaſe, will not he reply, that he holds his Faith by the ſame tenour that our Proteſtant writers do, and whilſt the tenour is the ſame, by confuting him, we do but confute, and confound our ſelves?

2. By vertue of what Proteſtant Principle can we perſecute any ſuch *Diſſenters* whoſe demeanour is peaceable? For either they are in the right, or they are not? If they be in the right, our perſecution can only make them Confeſſours, and Martyrs, and our ſelves deteſtable and bloody Tyrants. If they be not in the right; yet they cannot reaſonably be denied, what we grant even the greateſt malefactours in our Courts of Iudicature, *viz* That ſentence never paſſe for the delinquents puniſhment, till they be legally convicted of their crimes. Now I wiſh it were ſuggeſted to me, wherein a peaceable nonconformiſt can be found guilty by vs For what's the ſubſtance of his charg? Is it that he conforms not his inward aſſent, and judgment to the Church of England, or that exteriourly he abſents himſelf from our lyturgy and Communion? If the firſt: On what account can we find him guilty? For though exteriourly he conforme not his judgment to the Church of England, yet he conforms it to that, which our Divines take to be the Rule of Faith *viz The Scripture & his own interpretation on it*, and if this be that hainous crime of his by condemning him, at the ſame time we paſſe ſentence againſt our ſelves, and condemn the poor Fanatick on no better ground, than that he will not renounce the *Rule of Faith* from which he never ought to ſwerve. If the ſecond. Then has the zealous ſepariſt farr harder meaſure; for were not this to perſecute him meerly becauſe he judges it baſe in it ſelf, and vnworthy of a Chriſtian, to diſſemble with vs? And if we muſt propagate the Ghoſpel by ſuch means as theſe, *Vnfortunate Diſſenters!* what vnhappy Planet reign'd at your birth, that you alone, ſhould live vnder that fatal neceſſity of either being perſecuted in this world, becauſe you will not diſſemble

with God, and man, beleeve one thing, and profesſe an other; or of being puniſhed eternally in the life to come, for that horrid ſin of hypocriſy?

My LORDS & Gentlemen

Our vnderſtanding is a frank noble faculty, not to be overawed in the aſſent it gives: Tis an upright vncorrupt Iudge that in ſpite of feare or love, will ſtill paſſe ſentence according to the cleareſt evidence: Now vnles we can produce Principles of greater ſtrength then the grounds of other Churches are, and ſhew an obligation in every one to embrace our Doctrine, tis in vain to thinke, that any peaceable ſubject may not lawfully diſſent from vs interiourly, and exteriourly deſert our Communion when he will. All which when we have ſeriouſly reflected on, who would not wonder at the tender bowells of our ſanguinary Saint, that magnificent Founder and Finder-out of Fanaticiſm who not long ſince in his anſwer to *the Apologetical Epiſtle* out of a Chriſtian compaſſion to Recuſants could ſpend ſo much ſweat in whetting the ſeverity of the laws, and putting a new edg vpon *penal Statutes*? Had the Doctor by ſolid arguments where in any prudent perſon might acquieſce proved a tye, and duty in every one, to conforme to our way of worſhip, had he ſhewd that Chriſt ever whipp'd ſinners into the Temple, as he whipt then out, he had gone rationally to worke, and had ſhew'd vs ſome thing beſides tricks in divinitie, at which we muſt needs ſay, he has a very ſingular dexteritie, for I can not but complain by a ſad experience, that the profane ſpirit of drollery, which appeares in every part of his Polemick writings has been highly prejudicial to vs; and tis ſo contrary to the nature, and weight of Religious concerns, that all the arguments it vſhers in, diſguiſed in that antick dreſſe, never looke like themſelves, but rather like ſcenecal Ralleries, deſin'd only for Diſſenters ſport. And whilſt the Doctor makes all Proteſtants ſo extreamly ridiculous, can we blame the laughter of our Adverſaries, or thinke much that they take our *Principles* for meer ſhadows of ſenſe, that vaniſh away like the Ghoſt of *Creuſa* when a *Roman Champion* offers to approach, and lay hands vpon them?

Hence it has been often doubted of by very many, whether the

the Doctor did intend in his Bookes to abuse Protestants or Papists most. Can any one then take him for a maintainer of our cause whilst he gives vs such clear evidence in all he writes, that a serious defence of the Religion established by law, was either the furtheſt of his thoughts; or that his fancy is top full of Fanatick Homilies, Playbook expressions, & indigested Reading, & that out of the confused heapes of such, his *Polemick lumber*, he still picks vp, & writes down what lyes next the door?

But to plead for an *English Inquisition* as in effect the Doctor did, and have any peaceable subject without the least conviction of judgment compell'd, and frighned into Communion with vs, did not only argue a cancred and vnchristian heart, but was I thinke, the most efficacious way, to train a *Dissenter* vp, to the very worst of crimes. For when a man has once gone against his conscience courageously, and renounced God, and all Religion, as he imagines, what part is there in sacriledg, blood, or Rebellion he will stick to act?

And this prompts me yet to a further consideration, whether at least till such time as our Divines have set forth and publish'd the true Principles of Protestant Religion, a liberty of conscience, that is, an exemption from Ecclesiastical and penal Statutes, may not be thought a seasonable and very necessary point of Indulgence? we have now vsed coercitive wayes for above a hundred yeares, and what have we purchased by them, but the publick aversion, and I wish I may not add the private hatred of our Adversaries, and it may be some few hypocritical Converts may be numbred too, who to save their estates, or rayse their fortunes, would as easily turn devout Disciples of Mahomet? And may not we boast of these glorious advantages, may not we hope that such zealous Proselytes, will bring great blessings with them to the Church of England?

Such effects of our rigour [and we must not hope for any better] have made me often thinke with the great *Gamaliel*, that if the wayes of separatists be from God, they will thrive & prosper whether we will or no; if they be not from God, they will quickly disappeare like smoake in the air, and come to nothing of themselves. *Acts.* 5.

But if reasons of state, and a liberty of conscience cannot yet stand togeather, at least let our zeal be of an equal extent, and an even temper, let it naturally diffuse its influence as the sun does its beams, a like every way, for whilst our severitie runs all on one side, as if no sin could damn a soule but Popery, we seem evidently to diffide in the goodnes of our cause, and give an occasion to the world to thinke, that the Wisdome of this noble Senate, has at length found out, not only some weaknes in our own way, but something invincible in the Church of Rome, which if seriously considered, like a Torrent of Truth would carry all before it. And here I can not omitt to tell you, that this partiality of our rigour has already given Protestants the confusion, and Papists the comfort to imagine, that our feares and jealousies of Popery, which at present disturbe and distract the nation, are but the self same sprights, that haunted *Caiphas* his house, lay vnder the Iews Council table, and scared them with the Romans coming and overrunning their Country. There have been men of so weake a judgment, that they have dyed only with the feare of death; and it is not without all ground, that our Adversaries now hope, we shall at length turn Papists with the feare of Popery. This certain; the more we apprehend contagious diseases, the sooner they are caught, and the more powerfull influence the infection has vpon vs.

enient Romani & tollent, &c.
c. 11.

But I must not be tedious, and now I hope I have performed my duty what ever happen, it being aboundantly enough to have shewed our bleeding wounds to our *Healing Parliament* and our *Nursing Father & Defender of the Faith.*

My LORDS & Gentlemen.

We can not doubt but the preservation of Protestant Religion is your great care and study; but in the redresse of these things, that nothing may be wanting to the accomplishment of our wishes, let vs not hate one an other for Religion sake, nor run our selves into vnchristian heates, on account of that Faith, which is the true ground of Charitie, and the only adamantine bond of love and vnitie. And you my deare children in the *House of Commons*

Ne Pueri, ne tanta animis assuescite bella, *Virg. l. 6*
Neu Patriæ validas in viscera vertite vires,
Tuque prior, Tu parce, genus qui ducis Olympo,
Projice tela manu sanguis meus.

And you my Heroical sons, and my deareſt children in the *House of Peers*, who derive your names from numerous descents of renowned Ancestors, you I hope will remember, that sweet and obliging wayes, are the rich ornaments and the great characters of your high birth and blood. Tis at your feet I leave my grievances and I confidently hope they will sinke deep into your noble soules. On this assurance with my blessing to both Houses I shall ever pray to Almighty God, the God of peace, the God of love, the Authour of light, and the fountain of Wisdome, that he will move your hearts, and direct your thoughts by such a larg proportion of his Holy grace, that all your Acts, Votes, and counsels, may succeed ever to his own glory, the good of his Church, the honour and vnion of King and Parliament, & the lasting peace & prosperity of the people.

FINIS.